MIMSY: A System For Analyzing Time Series Data in the Stock Market Domain

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

(Computer Sciences)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

1993

APPROVED

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Abstract

MIMSY: A SYSTEM FOR ANALYZING TIME SERIES DATA IN THE STOCK MARKET DOMAIN

In this thesis I describe a real–world application built on top of the CORAL deductive database system. This application is meant to demonstrate the power of CORAL not only as a deductive database but also as a generic extensible database system. The application, Mimsy, is a stock market historical reporting system that can answer questions about daily stock market pricing data. I will describe the use of the Mimsy system, and issues related to its implementation.

Chapter 1

Overview

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.
– *Lewis Carroll , "Jabberwocky"*

1.1 Introduction

CORAL [RSS92]is an extensible deductive database system developed at the University of Wisconsin. While providing all the functionality of a standard logic programming environment like Datalog [CGT89], CORAL also provides the functionality of a general–purpose extensible database system [RSSS93b] .

CORAL provides two different operating environments. First, it provides an interpreter capable of processing a declarative Datalog–like language. Second, it provides an imperative environment where CORAL can be accessed from within a host language. This environment is geared toward the building of non–trivial database applications. The host language is C++ [ES90].

The first non–trivial application built using the CORAL imperative environment is $\mathcal{E}XPLAIN$ [ARR+93]. $\mathcal{E}XPLAIN$ is a tuple derivation browser that allows users to visualize the execution of a declarative query in CORAL for the purposes of explaining the results of a query or to do "rule–level" debugging. In effect, the user can determine which rules were responsible for putting which facts in the database, or conversely, which rules should have put facts into the database, but did not.

Though the notion of tracking which rules put which facts into the database has wide applicability, $\mathcal{E}XPLAIN$ is mainly useful for people familiar with logic programming or rule–based environments. The second non–trivial system built on top of CORAL is Mimsy, a system for asking questions about stock market data. Mimsy is the subject of this thesis. The raison d'être of Mimsy is twofold: First, to show that a non–trivial application can be built using CORAL; second, to develop an application that is *useful* in its own right.

An explanation of the name "Mimsy" is in order. The name was chosen for two reasons. First, it was meant to be evocative of the Lewis Carroll poem included in the epigraph of this chapter.[1] Second, Mimsy is inspired by a commercial application sold by Logical Information Machines, Inc., called MIM[2] [Lew92]. Mimsy is meant to be thought of as an adjective meaning MIM–like. In lieu of a "Related Work" section in this thesis, MIM should be thought of as *the* related work.

This is the way that MIM is described in its manual [Mac92]:

> MIM allows a user to mine for nuggets of knowledge from the vast

[1]Epigraphs for most other chapters are from [WT88].

[2]Logical Information Machines and MIM are registered trademarks of Logical Information Machines, Inc.

> quantities of historical stock, commodity, economic and fundamental data. This is done by constructing and executing ad hoc queries against the historical data.[3]

This statement holds true for Mimsy as well. It should be noted that Mimsy is at once both more powerful and less powerful than MIM. For example, MIM has an extraordinary set of date primitives, whereas Mimsy has only a rudimentary subset. However, MIM's range of extensibility is rather limited, while Mimsy's extensibility has the full range of expressiveness of declarative CORAL, by virtue of the fact that it has the entire CORAL system built in. Also, MIM provides no way to deal with portfolios, whereas Mimsy allows portfolios to be used in the same way as regular stock market data.

Mimsy consists of three parts. First, there is an interface that accepts queries in the form of the Mimsy query language. Second, there is a translator the accepts that Mimsy query and translates it into corresponding CORAL statements. These statements are then sent to the Mimsy server. Third, the Mimsy server processes the query and returns the answer back to the interface for viewing by the user.

The design of the Mimsy system is shown in Figure 1.1. There are two basic parts to the Mimsy system: the client and the server. The server consists of a front–end that manages communication to the clients and a modified version of CORAL. These modifications include new data types and new types of relations. The front–end manages communications between the clients and CORAL. The communication between client and server is accomplished over Berkeley sockets

[3]Used by permission.

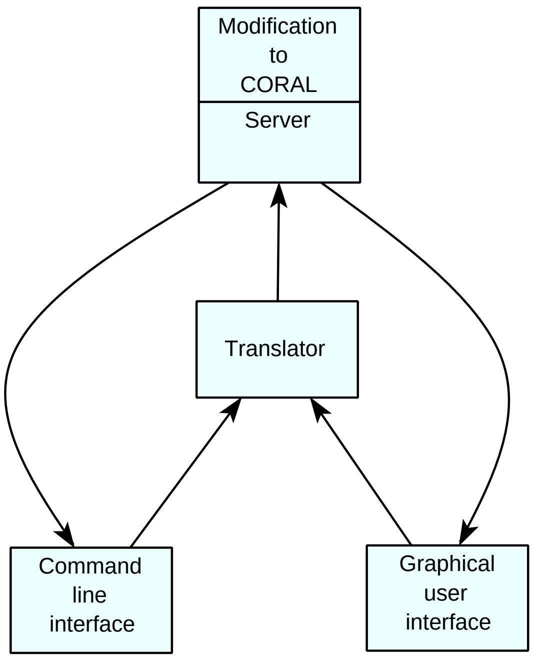


Figure 1.1: The design of the Mimsy system

using techniques and publicly available source code described in [Ste90].

Mimsy clients consist of two parts. The first part acquires a query in the Mimsy query language from the user. The interface and the Mimsy query language are described in Chapter 2. A graphical version of the interface, for use with the X Window System, is described in Chapter 3. These two chapters are meant to serve as a user's manual for the Mimsy system. The second part of a Mimsy client is a translator that takes in a Mimsy query and translates it into its CORAL equivalent. This is described in Chapter 4. The result of the translation is sent to the server. After a query is sent to the server, which is described in Chapter 5, the server's reply is sent back to the interface.

There are two main extensions to CORAL which exemplify one of CORAL's major features: the ease with which CORAL can be extended. The first is a new data type that adds the ability to reason about portfolios. This will be described in Section 2.7. The second extension is a new relation type optimized for use with stock market data and its time–series nature. This will be described in Section 5.2.

1.2 Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like thank my advisor, Raghu Ramakrishnan, not only for giving me the opportunity to be a Research Assistant and do this project, but also for providing me support and encouragement along the way. Thanks also go to Praveen Seshadri, who also provided support, both technical and otherwise. Because of their involvement during the design process, this work is as much theirs as it is mine. Special thanks to Eben Haber for his help in flattening my learning curve for InterViews. I would also like to thank Walt Ludwig, Nick Street and John Cheevers for help with $\LaTeX$. Thanks also go to Susan Hert for helpful comments on an earlier draft of this work. Finally, I would like to thank my long–suffering wife, Mary, AKA the world's greatest proof–reader, to whom I owe about a year's worth of washing dishes.

Chapter 2

The Language

Where the devil
should he learn our language? I will give him some
relief, if it be but for that.
Stefano to Trinculo – The Tempest II.ii(67)

In this chapter, a description of the Mimsy query language is given. The goal is to provide an SQL–like language specifically geared toward the application of querying stock market data. I will first provide an overview of the language in Section 2.1. In Section 2.2 I will describe the command line interface to the query language. In Section 2.3 I will discuss the graphing utilities available from the command line interface. The Mimsy query language will be described in detail in Sections 2.4 through 2.8. Mimsy query language extensibility is discussed in Section 2.10. To close out the chapter, I will discuss the data used by the query language in Section 2.11.

2.1 Overview of the Query Language

The basic structure of a Mimsy query is as follows:

```
select <something>
when <something-else>
save as <something-to-be-saved>
```

Both the `when` and the `save as` part of the query are optional. The `select` clause determines what data will be returned to the user. The `when` clause determines for which dates the data in the `select` clause will be shown. The `save as` clause specifies that the answers should be projected into a relation instead of displaying the results of the query on the screen.

The data operated on by Mimsy is known as a series. A series is a vector of price data. A series can be thought of as a binary relation with the first column specifying the date or time index, and the second column specifying the value of the series at that index. In Mimsy, a series is identified by its ticker symbol and an identifying attribute. For example, `close of abc` represents the close series for the stock whose ticker symbol is `abc`. The series used in Mimsy are cataloged and described in Section 2.11.

Operations, known as *aggregates*, can be applied to series to produce values. Some of the standard SQL aggregates implemented in Mimsy are `average`, `min`, `max`, etc. Aggregates and a time range are applied to base series. For example `the 30 day average of close of abc` represents the 30 day moving average of the stock whose ticker symbol is abc. The aggregates and their definitions are described in Section 2.6.

2.2 The Command Line Interface

The command line interface provides a means of entering Mimsy queries at the UNIX command line. It provides command line editing and a command history mechanism similar to the "tcsh" shell. This facility is achieved by using the GNU readline [Fox91b] and GNU history [Fox91a] libraries.

All valid queries conform to the grammar found in Appendix A. Note that all queries (and commands) are terminated by a semicolon. Once a query has been received, the interface determines whether the string is a command or a query. If the input string is a query, it is sent to the translator. If it is a command, it is handled locally.

The command line interface to the Mimsy translator has only a few commands. Besides executing queries that begin with the word "select" and "graph", the command line interface understands the commands in Figure 2.1.

The definitions for the non–trivial commands are as follows:

- Portfolios are created by using the "create" command from the command line interface. It has two arguments: a string that represents the name of the portfolio, and a list of the stocks to be added to the portfolio. For example:

  ```
  create myport [[drv,1000,9.25],[adt,1000,12.5]];
  ```

  will create a portfolio called "myport" with 2 stocks: 1000 shares of DRV purchased at $\$9\frac{1}{4}$, and 1000 shares of ADT purchased at $\$12\frac{1}{2}$.

Command	Explanation
create	Create a portfolio
store	Save a relation or a portfolio
show	Show portfolios defined on server
list	List relation on sever
load	Load catalog information from server
send	Send an arbitrary string to the server
timing	Toggle timing of commands at the server
history	Show the command line history
quit	Quit the command line interface
quit_server	Kill the server

Figure 2.1: Mimsy commands

- The "store" command saves a relation or a portfolio so that it will be loaded by the server the next time it starts up. To save the newly created portfolio "myport," issue the following command:

```
store portfolio myport;
```

- To save the relation "myrel" which was created by a query with a `save as` clause, issue the following command:

```
store myrel;
```

- The "show" command lists all of the portfolios currently defined on the server. The answer is returned to the interface.

- The "list" command lists all of the relations currently defined on the server. The answer is shown at the server.

- The “load” command loads catalog information from the server. This information is loaded when the command line interface starts up, but a “load” command will be needed if new portfolios, series or properties are defined.

- The “history” command lists commands previously entered and illustrates that the command line interface has a history mechanism similar to the “tcsh” shell.

- The “send” command allows the user to send an arbitrary CORAL string to the server. Everything after the word “send” is sent to the server as it was typed. For example, if the user wanted to display the CORAL defaults on the server, the following command would be sent:

```
send display_defaults.;
```

There are several command line options available in the command line interface. They are shown in Figure 2.1.

2.3 Graphing Utilities

When a query is issued at the command line interface using the `select` keyword, the output is sorted and displayed on the screen. However, if the `graph` keyword is used, the user will be presented with a graph. For example:

```
graph close of ibm when date is after "1/1/90";
```

graph close of ibm when date is after 1/1/90;

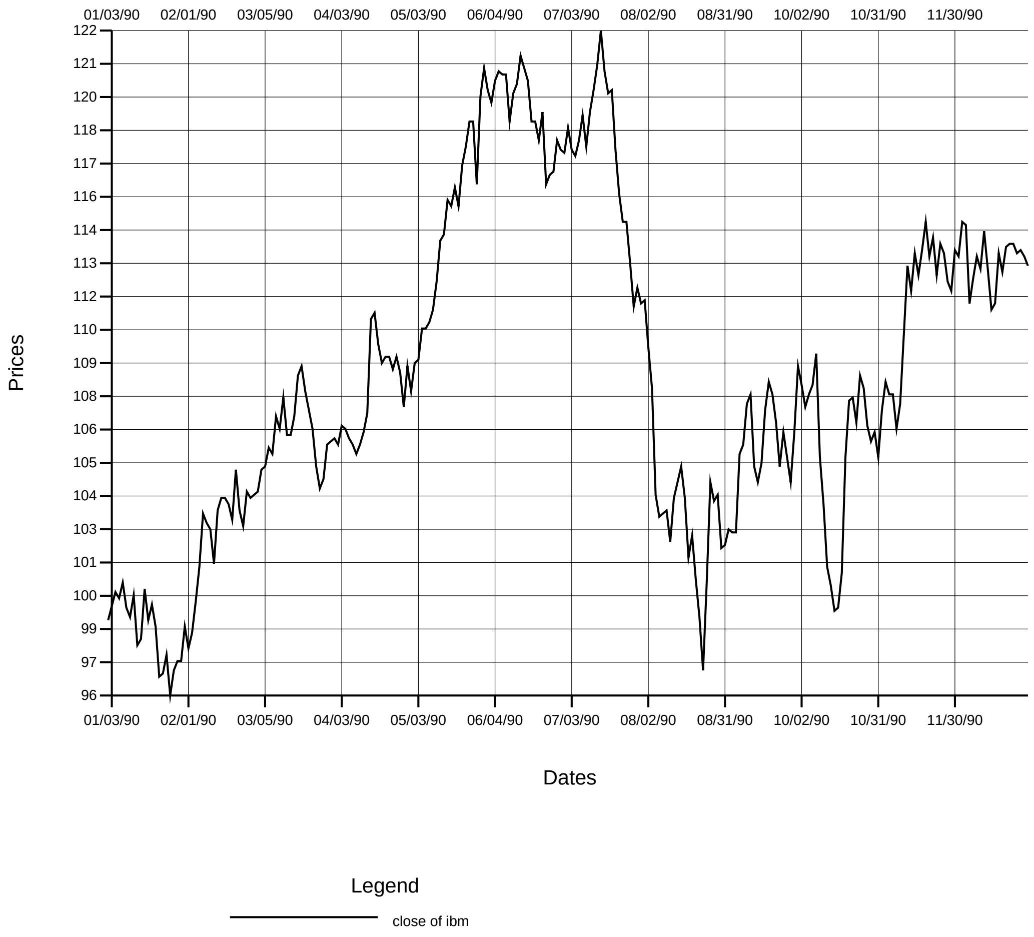


Figure 2.2: Typical output from a "graph" query

Option	Explanation
-C	Do not load tables from server upon startup
-S	Show CORAL query that the parser generated
-T	Testing mode. Equivalent to -qcn
-c	Print query in CORAL print() statement before parsing
-f <file>	Use <file> for input
-h <host>	Use <host> as host for server
-n	Do not send translated query to server
-o <file>	Use <file> for output
-p	Print query and number of queries processed before parsing
-q	Do not print prompt
-s	Do not sort output
-t	Insert timing commands into CORAL code sent to server

Table 2.1: Command line options

will cause a graph, like the one in Figure 2.2, to appear if the user is on an X Window terminal or workstation. If the user wishes to save the PostScript output, the query should be issued with the `save as` clause, for example:

```
graph close of ibm when date is after "1/1/90"
save as "filename.ps";
```

The PostScript for the graphics is generated by the IPL graphics program from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine [Gru90]. When the data is returned from the server it is sorted and formatted for output to the screen by a series of commands similar to the following command:

```
/usr/bin/sort -t/ +2n +0n +1n /usr/tmp/aaaa16579>/usr/tmp/caaa16579;
echo "graph close of ibm when date is after 11/1/90;">>/usr/tmp/caaa16579;
/usr/gnu/bin/gawk -f graph.awk /usr/tmp/caaa16579>/usr/tmp/daaa16579;
tipl /usr/tmp/daaa16579 > /usr/tmp/daaa16579.ps;gv /usr/tmp/daaa16579.ps
```

This string is constructed and executed by means of the `system()` system call. The call to "gv" at the end of the string is a call to GhostView [The92], a PostScript viewer for X Window system. When a "graph" query is executed, a GhostView process is run in the background. This means more than one PostScript viewer can be running at once.

2.4 The Select Clause

In the Mimsy query language the `select` portion of the language is comprised of one or more select attributes separated by commas.

2.4.1 Select Attributes

A select attribute is composed of a select expression followed by an optional `repeated` clause. A select expression is a series, aggregate on a series, or an arithmetic expression involving a series or an aggregate. Examples of the select clause are shown below.

```
select close of ibm;
select 3 * close of ibm repeated for 10 days;
select the 4 day average of close of ibm + 1;
select close of ibm - close of ibm 1 day ago
    repeated from the previous 2 days to
    the next 3 days;
```

It should be noted that all series can be modified by an offset clause, for example `close of ibm 1 day ago` or `close of abc 2 days later`. If the offset clause is used in conjunction with an aggregate, the offset applies to the aggregate being applied to the series. For example,

```
the 5 day average of the close of ibm 3 days ago
```

means that 3 days prior to the date under consideration the 5 day moving average of the closing price of IBM should be computed.

2.4.2 The Repeated Clause

A select attribute can be modified by a `repeated` clause in the `select` portion of a query. `Repeated` clauses take 1 of 2 forms, as shown below:

```
select close of abc repeated from previous 10 days to next 10 days;
select close of abc repeated for the next 10 days;
```

There is also an alternate version of the latter form in which the "next" is implied:

```
show close of abc repeated for 10 days;
```

The effect of the `repeated` clause is that, for a given date returned from the `when` clause, the `repeated` clause causes the select attribute to be shown for all dates in the range. A `repeated` clause takes precedence over any offset applied to a select attribute. For example, in the query:

```
select close of abc - close of abc 1 day ago repeated for 3 days
when <some condition>;
```

For each date on which the when condition holds, the 1 day move of the close of `abc` is shown for that day and for the next 3 days as well.

2.5 The When Clause

The `when` clause is meant to be a list of predicates, separated by logical connectives that choose the dates for which the data in the `select` clause is to be shown. The `when` clause comes in 3 flavors: relational operator clauses, `change` clauses, and `crosses` clauses. These clauses are described below. All of these clauses can be further modified by a condition interval. A condition interval is a date range for which the condition must hold true.

2.5.1 Relational Operator Clauses

The relational operator clause tests one select expression against another for a specific date. For example:

```
select close of abc when close of abc > 12;
select close of abc when close of abc > close of b;
select close of abc when close of abc > close of b * 6;
```

For these queries, the implication is that the condition holds over 1 day. For a longer date range, the condition interval can be used. For example:

```
select close of xrx when close of xrx > 12 over 3 days;
```

The implication of a date range applied to a relational operator is that the condition holds for the first day of the series and the last day of the series, and the left argument does not cross the right argument. For example:

```
select close of abc when close of abc > close of b over 3 days
```

implies that the `close of abc` is greater than the `close of b` on the first and last days of the range, and that the prices do not cross. For a definition of the semantics of the `crosses` clause, see Section 2.5.3. These semantics hold for all relational operator except “not equals”. In this case the operator must be applied to every date in the range.

2.5.2 Change Clauses

The `change` clauses test whether a select expression is up or down over some period. There are three versions of this clause. First, a select expression can be checked against some fixed amount. For example:

```
select close of abc when close of abc is up at least 10;
```

Second, a select expression can be checked against another select expression. For example:

```
select close of abc when close of abc is up more than close of b;
```

This means that the `close of abc` will be displayed when the `close of abc` is up and the `close of b` is up and the `close of abc` is up more than the `close of b` is up over a 1 day period.

Finally, a select expression can be checked against a percentage. For example,

```
select close of abc when close of abc is up more than 10%;
```

The percentage figure can also be a select expression. There are also negated versions of `change` clauses. For example:

```
select <something>
when close of x is not up
```

This means that `close of x` is down or unchanged over the interval. When the negated `change` clauses are used with relational operators like “less than”, “more than”,“at least”, etc., the “not” applies to the operator. For example, the query

```
select a when close of abc is not up more than 10;
```

means the `close of abc` should be displayed when the `close of abc` is up, but not when it is up more than 10 points.

2.5.3 Crosses Clauses

The `crosses` clause tests when one series crosses another. A cross occurs when, for example, one stock’s price moves above the price of another when the first stock was smaller or equal in price to the second stock in the previous time period. For example:

```
select close of abc when close of abc crosses close of b;
```

This query will select the `close of abc` on all dates when the `close of abc` crosses above or below the `close of b`. The query writer can also specify either “above” or “below” in the `crosses` clause to specify which type of cross is of interest. For example:

```
select close of abc
when close of abc crosses above
    the 30 day average of close of abc;
```

The preceding query also illustrates that any select expression can be used as the right or left argument to the `crosses` predicate.

However, it should be noted that any non–series (e.g. an equation, aggregate, etc.) that appears as an argument to the `crosses` clause is first be projected out into a temporary relation. See Section 4.1 for more details. This is because the `crosses` predicate in CORAL expects to operate on series. If a non–series is present, one must be created beforehand by projecting out the appropriate date/value combination. The only exception to this is if one of the arguments is a numeric constant, e.g. `when close of b crosses 8`, which will return true whenever the value of the `close of b` crosses the value 8. Also, in the presence of a condition interval, the `crosses` clause will succeed if *any* crosses exist in the range. There is also a negated version of the `crosses` predicate. For example:

```
select close of abc when close of abc not crosses close of b;
```

This means that the `close of abc` will be displayed when the `close of abc` does not cross the `close of b`. It should be noted that the negated version of the `crosses` predicate illustrates the fact that the negated `crosses` clauses makes use of CORAL negation. This obviates the need for positive and negative versions of the predicate in the CORAL translation. For a description of how this is translated, see Section 4.6.

2.5.4 Condition Interval

Any `when` clause can be modified by a condition interval. A condition exists in one of two forms; either an `over` clause, like `over 3 days`, or a relative range like `from the previous 3 days to the next 10 days`. The default period for any of the `when` clauses is 1 day.

2.6 Aggregates

Aggregates in Mimsy are operations that are applied to either series or portfolios. Aggregates compute a single answer from the time range and series that are given as arguments. The aggregates included in the system are shown in Figure 2.2.

The `average` aggregate computes a moving average of a series for the time period specified. The definition of `min`, `max` and `sum` are the same as in SQL. `Move` represents the total change in price of the series from the beginning of the time period to the end of the time period. `Pcmove` represents the total percentage change in price of the series from the beginning of the time period to the end of the time period.

All aggregates are used as follows, using `average` as an example:

```
select the 5 day average of close of ibm
when the 3 day average of ibm is up more than 10%;
```

This query will show the 5 day moving average of the close of IBM on each day when the 3 day average rises by more than 10 percent in 1 day.

#	Name	Mimsy Aggregate name
1	Average	average
2	Max	max
3	Min	min
4	Sum	sum
5	Move	move
6	Percentage Move	pcmove

Table 2.2: Mimsy aggregates

Mimsy aggregates are written to recognize opportunities for efficient execution. This is done by having the aggregate cache its arguments and some of its computations from the previous invocation. Note that forward motion of time is always assumed when an aggregate is being iterated across a range of dates.

For example, if the `average` aggregate is called on day 1 through day 20 of a series, it will cache the number of days in the range, the name of the portfolio or series, and the sum of the values over the range. If the next invocation is for day 2 through day 21 of the series, to compute the average it is sufficient to get the value for the previous lower bound of the range, subtract it from the sum, get the value for new upper bound for the range, add it to the sum and divide by the number of days in the series. If the next invocation is not for the next day in the window, the cached values are discarded and the computation must proceed as if called on the first day of a range.

The aggregates `min` and `max` are optimized similarly. If either of these aggregates is called with the same date range, for the same symbol and for the next day after the one used in the previous invocation, the call can be optimized instead of scanning the entire range. If the previous minimum or maximum is still in the date range, only the new point in the range is needed, i.e. the last date in the range. If the new point is greater than the maximum (or smaller than the minimum), then the new value is returned. Otherwise, the cached maximum (minimum) value is returned. If the old maximum (minimum) is now out of range, the entire date range must be scanned.

The effect of having aggregates optimized in this way is that the aggregates will recognize *all* occasions for optimizations. This obviates the need for any higher level optimizations other than sorting the data before the aggregates are executed.

2.7 Portfolios

Portfolios, or groups of stocks, are handled separately from series and aggregates and have a different set of properties. Portfolios are specified through the use of the keyword `portfolio`, followed by a portfolio property and a portfolio name. An example of how portfolios are used is as follows:

```
select portfolio value of myport
when the 3 day average of portfolio value of myport
           is down more than 10%;
```

This query will show the value of the portfolio "myport" when the 3 day average of the portfolio value of "myport" is down more than 10% over 1 day. It should be noted that the normal set of aggregates (Section 2.6) can be applied to portfolios. This is because the property/portfolios pair behaves similarly to series.

There are currently two properties that can be applied to portfolios, `value` and `position`. The value of a portfolio is the sum of the prices for a particular day. The position of a portfolio is the value minus the sum of the initial prices times the initial quantities. This reflects the value of the portfolio relative to the initial prices.

2.8 Date Handling

Dates and specification of date ranges play a large role in the Mimsy query language. Section 2.8.1 covers the syntax of basic date selections. Section 2.8.2 covers the two special date forms for specifying regularly occurring date conditions.

2.8.1 Basic Date Handling

Selections made by the `when` clause can be limited by dates as well. There are currently four forms for specifying dates. First, a particular date can be specified; for example, `when date is "1/2/90"`. Second, an upper or lower bound can be specified, for example; `date is after "1/2/90"` or `date is before "1/2/90"`. Third, a date range can be specified; for example:

```
date is from "1/1/90" to "1/1/91".
```

There are several date units than can be applied to offset clauses and range clauses. The following date units are available in Mimsy: day, week, month, year. It should be noted that all dates supplied to the Mimsy query language must be quoted strings. A description of the grammar for date strings can be found Appendix B.

2.8.2 Special Date Form

There is a special form of the date condition that checks for a particular month or day of the week. For example, if the user is concerned with all Fridays, the following clause could be used:

```
when date is on "friday";.
```

If the user is only concerned with dates in March, the following clause can be used:

```
when date is in "march";
```

Note in these examples that quoted strings must be used to specify dates, as they are passed directly to CORAL built–ins.

2.9 The Save As Clause

The `save as` clause has two semantically distinct uses in the query language. First, it can be used to save the results of a query into a CORAL relation. For example:

```
select close of abc -  close of b * 3
save as new_series;
```

This would create a new binary relation on the server called `new_series`. The new relation would have as its first column the dates for which the series was defined (in this case, all dates), and the second column would be the difference of `3 * close of b` and the `close of abc`. Likewise, a multi–column relation could be created by merely having multiple select attributes in the `select` clause.

Under most circumstances, use of the `save as` clause will create a normal CORAL relation. However, if the `select` clause contains 1 select attribute and there is no `when` clause (insuring a contiguous series), Mimsy will create a fast array relation, described in Section 5.2, which is more efficient.

Using the `save as` clause only stores the results of the query to the database. It does not make the new relation persistent. In order to make the new relation visible the next time the server starts up, the user must issue the "save" command at the interface. For more information on the "save" command, see Section 2.2.

The second use of the `save as` clause is with the `graph` clause. To save a graph into a file instead of showing it on the screen, merely provide a filename as the argument to the `save as` clause. For example:

```
graph close of ibm when date is in 1990 save as "foo.ps";
```

This will save the PostScript output from the query to the file "foo.ps". More information on the `graph` clause can be found in Section 2.3.

2.10 Extensibility

Extensibility in Mimsy is provided by allowing strings found at certain places in the grammar to be passed uninterpreted to the server. Also, variables in a query that refer to variables in extensibility strings are allowed to appear in select expressions. Note that the first letter of a variable must be in upper case. A special variable, "`Date`", can appear in the argument string. In the translation, the string `Date` will be replaced by the variable that represents the current date under consideration. For example, suppose we had a predicate "extend" that returned some value. We would use it like this:

```
select close of abc,"new_series(Date,Val)",Val
when "extend(Date,X)" and X > 12.
```

This query illustrates how extensibility is used in the `select` clause. If an extensibility string is in the `select` list, it is not shown in the printed output. In order to display the values of an extensibility string, the variables must explicitly be put into the list of things to be displayed. For example:

```
select "a(Date,Test)", Test, close of ibm
when close of ibm is down more than 10%;
```

When extensibility strings are used in the `when` portion of the query, they are considered actual `when` clauses and as such the variables used to refer to the strings must exist in clauses that associate with them. An example of this is shown above in the `extend` query. The variable `X` must be included in the extensibility string before it can be referenced in the `X > 12` clause. To use this effectively, the user must be aware of certain aspects of how the query is translated into CORAL. For this information, see Chapter 4.

#	Name	Mimsy Sequence name
1	Close	close
2	High	high
3	Low	low
4	Volume	volume
5	Shares outstanding	shares
6	Beta	beta
7	Beta return	betaret
8	Capitalization	cap
9	Return	ret
10	Standard deviation	stdev

Table 2.3: Base series defined in Mimsy

2.11 Series

There are currently 10 base series each defined for 165 stocks. The data for these series comes from the University of Chicago's Center for Research in Security Prices (CRSP). The series and their keywords in Mimsy are shown in Table 2.3.

Series 1–5 are base series. That is, they are are actual values describing some property of the stock. Series 6–10 are composite series that represent some kind calculation performed by CRSP on the base data. These composite series are pre–calculated and stored as base data. The following descriptions are based on the definitions provided in the CRSP data manual [iSP92].

The *Beta* of a stock is the measure of its volatility with respect to the rest of the market [Mal85, EG91]. The Beta β is defined by the following equation [iSP92]:

$$\beta_i = \frac{\sum_t (ret_{i,t} mret3_t) - (\frac{1}{n})(\sum_t ret_{i,t})(\sum_t mret3_t)}{\sum_t (mret_t mret3_t) - (\frac{1}{n})(\sum_t mret_t)(\sum_t mret3_t)} \tag{2.1}$$

where:

- $ret_{i,t} = \log_{10}(1+$ return of security i on day $t)$
- $mret_t = \log_{10}(1+$ value–weighted market return on day $t)$
- $mret3_t = mret_{t-1} + mret_t + mret_{t+1}$ (a 3 day moving average market window)
- $n =$ number of observations for the year.

The *beta return*, also known as the "beta excess return" is the excess return of a specific stock less the average return of all issues in its beta portfolio.

The *capitalization* of a stock is the price of the stock times the number of shares outstanding. Usually, the price of the stock used in the calculation is the price at the end of some fixed time period. In the case of the CRSP data, the price used is the price at the end of the previous year.

The *return* of the stock represents its gain (or loss) per $1 of investment from the previous trading day.

The *standard deviation* of a stock is defined by the following equation [iSP92]:

$$\sigma_i = \frac{\sqrt{\sum_t ret_{i,t}^2 - \frac{1}{n}(\sum_t ret_{i,t})^2}}{n-1} \tag{2.2}$$

where:

- $ret_{i,t}$ = daily raw trade of security i on day t
- n = number of observations for the year (of $ret_{i,t}$)
- σ_i = yearly standard deviation for the i^{th} company.

Chapter 3

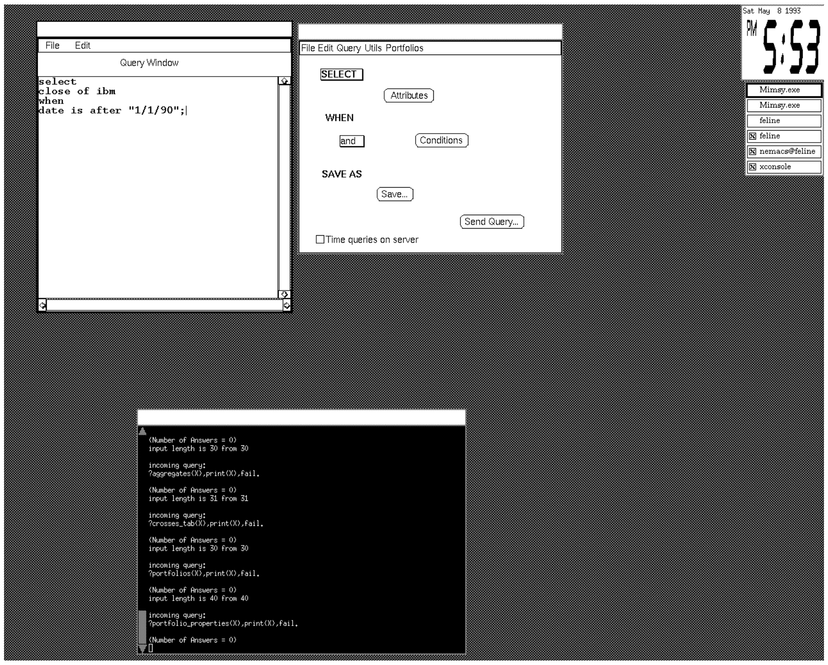
The Graphical Interface

He had a face only a mother could love.
Unknown

The Mimsy system provides a graphical user interface to its query language. The goal is to provide the user a means for constructing queries using only the mouse. The interface, which is about 9100 lines of C++ code, was also built to act like a graphical text editor so that users can copy and paste queries and the output of queries to other applications running on a workstation. In this chapter, I will first discuss the layout and use of the interface in Section 3.1. I will conclude the chapter with a discussion of issues related to the design of the interface in Section 3.2.

3.1 Use of the Interface

In this section, I will describe the basic use of the graphical interface. I will first describe how individual windows are used in Sections 3.1.1 through 3.1.4, and then describe how an example query is constructed in Section 3.1.5.



```
select
close of ibm
when
date is after "1/1/90";
```

```
(Number of Answers = 0)
input length is 30 from 30

incoming query:
?aggregates(X),print(X),fail.

(Number of Answers = 0)
input length is 31 from 31

incoming query:
?crosses_tab(X),print(X),fail.

(Number of Answers = 0)
input length is 30 from 30

incoming query:
?portfolios(X),print(X),fail.

(Number of Answers = 0)
input length is 40 from 40

incoming query:
?portfolio_properties(X),print(X),fail.

(Number of Answers = 0)
```

Figure 3.1: The Mimsy Interface at Application Start–up

3.1.1 Main Window

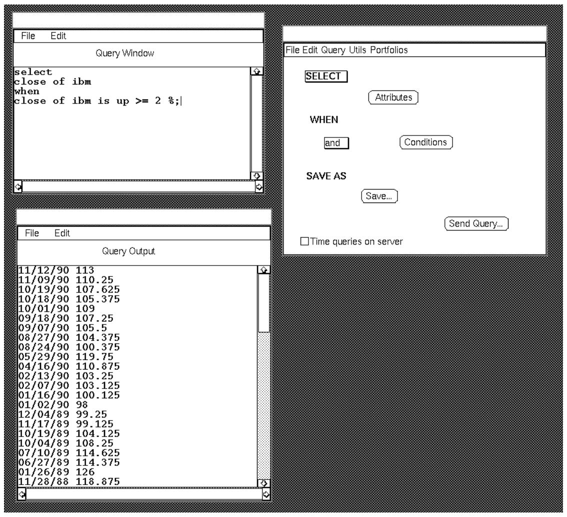
As shown in Figure 3.1, the main window is displayed when the application is started up. Its main function is to allow the construction of queries by bringing up the attributes and condition windows via their respective buttons. It also handles other functions via its menus. These are described below:

- The `File` menu has two items:
  - `About` which gives information about the application.
  - `Quit` which causes the application to exit.
- The `Edit` menu has one item, `Undo`, which allows the user to undo the last

clause added to the query.

- The `Query` menu has one item, `Clear Query`, which clears the current query from the query editor window.
- The `Utils` menu has four menu items:
  - `Reload Server Table` which reloads the database catalog information from the server.
  - `Set Host Name` which sets the host name for the host where the server is running.
  - `Send Arbitrary String...` sends an arbitrary string to the server untranslated. This is useful for sending raw CORAL to the server.
  - `Kill The Server...` sends the command to the server that causes it to exit.
- The `Portfolios` menu has three menu items:
  - `Create Portfolio` brings up a dialog box to aid in the creation of a new portfolio.
  - `List Portfolios` will list all the portfolios the server knows about.
  - `Save Portfolio` will save a portfolio on the server to a file, so that it is loaded at server startup time.

There are three other interesting features to note in the main window. First, there is the AND/OR pop–up menu to the left of the conditions button. When



```
select
close of ibm
when
close of ibm is up >= 2 %;
```

```
11/12/90 113
11/09/90 110.25
10/19/90 107.625
10/18/90 105.375
10/01/90 109
09/18/90 107.25
09/07/90 105.5
08/27/90 104.375
08/24/90 100.375
05/29/90 119.75
04/16/90 110.875
02/13/90 103.25
02/07/90 103.125
01/16/90 100.125
01/02/90 98
12/04/89 99.25
11/17/89 99.125
10/19/89 104.125
10/04/89 108.25
07/10/89 114.625
06/27/89 114.375
01/26/89 126
11/28/88 118.875
```

Figure 3.2: The Result of a Query

creating multiple `when` clauses, this pop–up menu determines which conjunctive will appear before the new clause. Second, the Check Box in the lower left corner can be used to time the queries on the server. Third, to send the query as displayed in the query editor, the user must push the `Send Query...` button. Figure 3.2 shows the result of executing a query in the interface.

3.1.2 The Query Editor

The query editor runs in two modes. In display mode, it provides means for displaying the currently constructed query, or a means for showing the output of a query. When it is in edit mode, it acts as a text editor for entering queries. These two modes have effects on the results of selecting a menu item.

There are two menus in the query editor:

- The `File` menu has four menu items:
  - `Read from File...` will read a file into the query editor.
  - `Write to File...` will write the query editor text out to a file.
  - `Edit Query` puts the query editor into editor mode.
  - `Close Window` will close the window if the window is being used as an output window. This menu item is disabled if this window is being used as a query editor.
- There are eight menu items in the `Edit` menu. The first six menu items are the standard editing menu items found on most graphical applications. The remaining menu items are:
  - `Send Query` sends the current contents of the query editor to the server. This menu item is displayed if this instance is being used as an output window.
  - `Send As Raw CORAL` will send the contents of the Query Editor untranslated to the server. This menu item is displayed if this instance is being used as an output window.

It should be noted that the facility to copy and paste is not one built into InterViews. It is accomplished by using the `XStoreBytes` and `XFetchBytes` Xlib[GS91] calls.

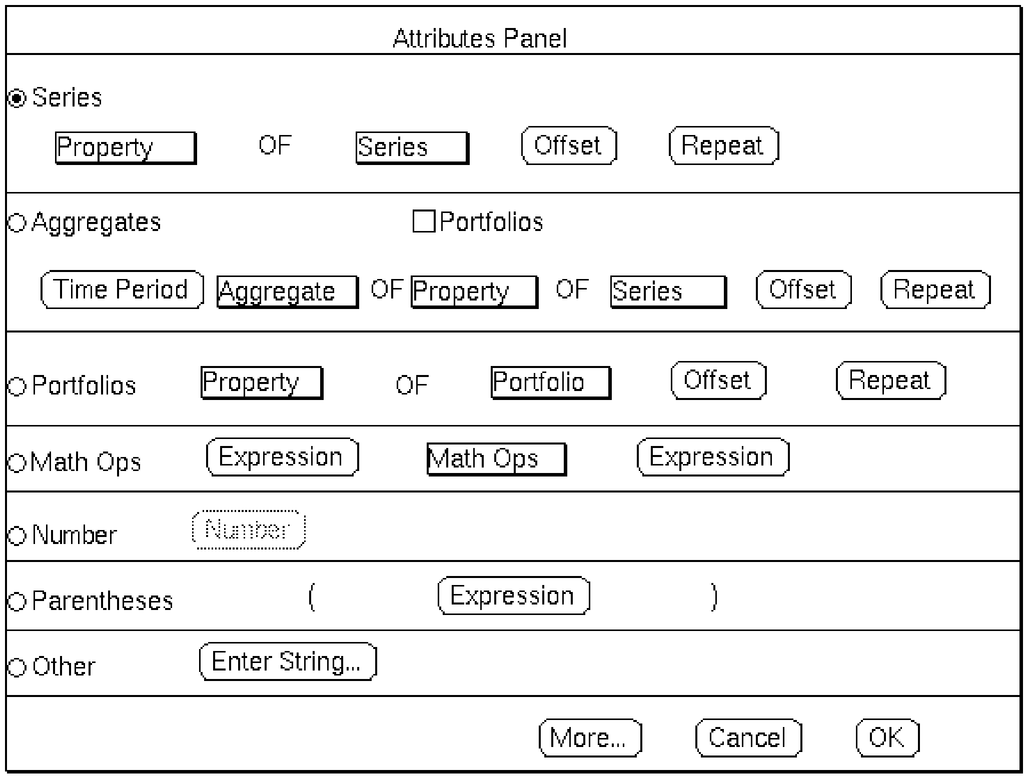

Attributes Panel
Series
Property OF Series Offset Repeat
Aggregates
Portfolios
Time Period Aggregate OF Property OF Series Offset Repeat
Portfolios Property OF Portfolio Offset Repeat
Math Ops Expression Math Ops Expression
Number Number
Parentheses (Expression)
Other Enter String...
More... Cancel OK

Figure 3.3: The Attribute Window

3.1.3 The Attribute Window

The attributes window (Figure 3.3) is used to add new select attributes (Section 2.4.1) to a `select` clause, or add operands to an expression. Once the clause is constructed and the "OK" button is pressed, the new clause will appear in the query editor. It contains seven sections that represent different types of select attributes that can be used. Before setting up a new select attribute the user must make sure that the radio button for the section that the user is interested in is selected. A description of the seven sections of the attribute window are as follows:

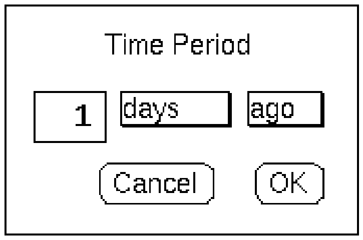


Figure 3.4: The Offset Dialog

- The `Series` section has the following items:
  - The `Property` pop–up menu for choosing properties on series.
  - The `Series` pop–up menu for choosing the series.
  - The `Offset` button for setting the offset to be applied to the series. An example of the offset selection dialog box is shown in Figure 3.4.
  - The `Repeat` button for setting the `repeated` clause to be applied to the series. An example of the `repeat` selection dialog box is shown in Figure 3.5. This button is disabled if the window is adding an operand to an expression.

  The definitions for the `Offset` and `Repeat` buttons are the same for the `Aggregate` and `Portfolio` sections.

- The `Aggregates` section has the following items:
  - The `Time Period` button brings up a dialog box similar to Figure 3.4 that allows the user to choose the time period to be applied to the aggregate.

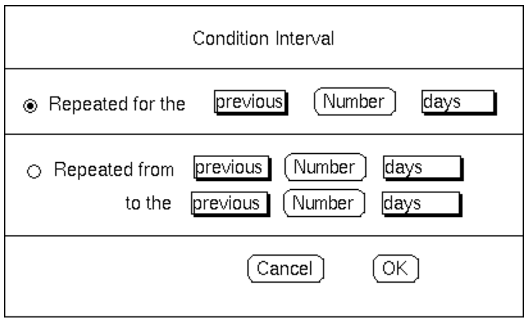


Figure 3.5: The Repeat Dialog

– The `Aggregate` pop–up menu provides a list of currently available aggregates.

– The `Portfolios` check box chooses whether the aggregates should act on a portfolio or a series. This check box is primarily used in setting up the `Properties` and `Series` menus.

– The `Properties` and `Series` pop–up menus are similar to the one in the `Series` section, unless the `Portfolios` check box is checked in which case the menus refer to portfolios and portfolio properties.

The items in the `Portfolios` section have similar definitions to the ones in the `Series` sections. There are three items in the `Math Ops` section:

– The first `Expression` button brings up another instance of the attribute dialog box to assist in setting the left operand to the arithmetic operation under construction.

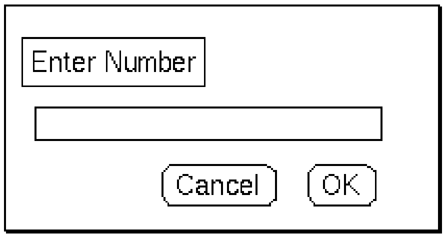


Figure 3.6: The Entry Dialog

  - The `MathOps` pop–up menu provides a menu of the standard arithmetic operators.
  - The second `Expression` button sets the right operand.

- The `Number` box brings up an entry dialog box, shown in Figure 3.6, and allows the user to enter a number.
- The `Parentheses` section has a single button, `Expression`, which is used to bring up another instance of the attribute window in order to construct a parenthetical clause.
- The `Other` section is used for entering extensibility strings (Section 2.10).

3.1.4 The Conditions Window

The conditions window (Figure 3.7) is used to add new `when` clauses (Section 2.5) to the query under construction. It too uses a set of radio buttons to control which section of the window is active. The condition window has six sections:

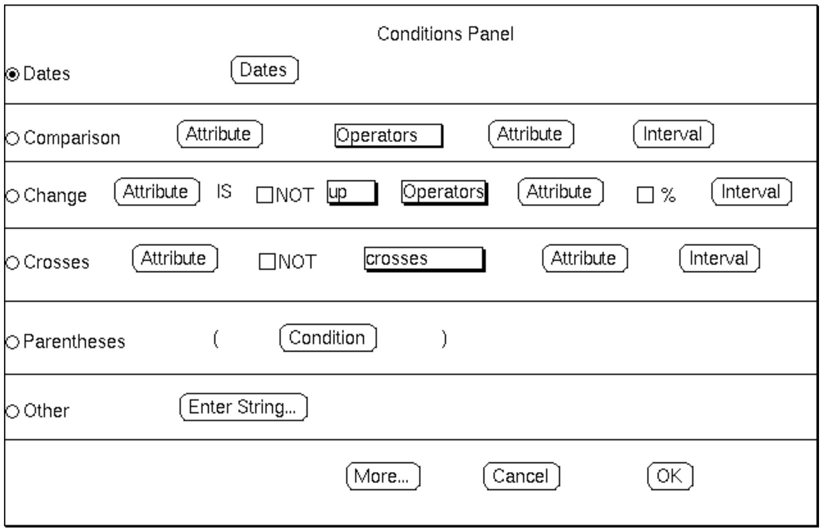


Figure 3.7: The Condition Window

- The `Dates` section brings up a date selection dialog box, shown in Figure 3.8. This dialog box allows the user to set up a date clause in accordance with the grammar described in section 2.8.
- The `Comparison` section has four items:
  - The first `Attribute` button brings up an Attribute window that allows the user to select the left operand of the comparison operator.
  - The `Operators` pop–up menu provides a menu of relational operators.
  - The second `Attribute` button brings up an Attribute window that allows the user to select the right operand of the comparison operator.
  - The `Interval` button brings up a window similar to the one in Figure 3.5 which allows the user to specify the time period over which the

condition is supposed to hold. It should be noted that the `Interval` buttons for the `Change` and `Crosses` sections are defined similarly.

- The `Change` section has seven items:
  - The first `Attribute` button brings up an Attribute window that allows the user to select the left operand to the `change` operator.
  - The `Not` check box is used to negate the operator.
  - The `Direction` pop–up menu is used for displaying the direction of change in which user is interested. The choices are `Up` and `Down`.
  - The `Operator` pop–up menu displays a menu of relational operators.
  - The second `Attribute` button brings up an Attribute window that allows the user to select the right operand of the `change` operator.
  - The `Percent` check box is used to indicate that the second attribute should be used as a percentage.
  - The `Interval` button is defined similarly to the one in the `Comparison` section.

  The `Crosses` section has five items:
  - The first `Attribute` button brings up an Attribute window that allows the user to select the left operand to the `crosses` operator.
  - The `Not` check box is used to negate the `crosses` predicate.

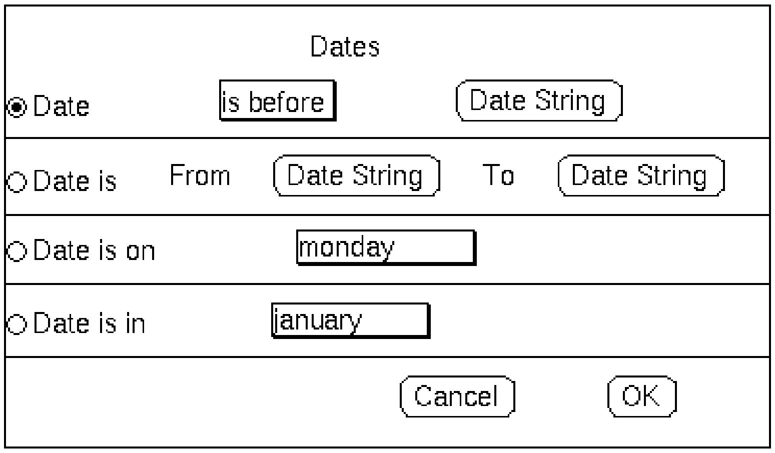

Dates
[✓ Date] is before Date String
Date is From Date String To Date String
Date is on monday
Date is in january
Cancel
OK

Figure 3.8: The Date Selection Dialog

- The `Crosses` pop–up menu is used to select which version of the `crosses` predicate the user is interested in.
- The second `Attribute` button brings up an Attribute window that allows the user to select the right operand of the `crosses` operator.
- The `Interval` button is defined similarly to the one in the `Comparison` section.

- The `Parentheses` section is used to create a parenthetical set of `when` clauses. Note that the conjunct used between clauses is determined by the AND/OR menu on the main window.
- The `Other` section is used to input extensibility strings (Section 2.10).

3.1.5 Construction of an Example Query

Now that each of the interface's windows has been described in detail, a description of how it works is in order. Suppose the user had the following query in mind:

```
select the 30 day average of close of sp500 / 2
when close of ibm crosses close of dec;
```

In order to construct this query the user would first push the `Attributes` button in the main window. An attributes dialog box (Figure 3.3) would appear. The user would select the type of clause that s/he would like to create. Since the `select` clause is an arithmetic operation (the aggregate is divided by 2), the user would select the `Math Ops` radio button and then push the left `Attribute` button. This would bring up yet another Attribute dialog. In this window, the user would select the `Aggregates` radio button and then push the `Time Period` button. The time period dialog (Figure 3.4) would appear and the user would select the 30 day time period and push `OK`. The user would then select `average` from the `Aggregates` menu, and `close` and `sp500` from the `Properties` and `Series` menus, respectively. Now that the clause is setup, the user can push the "OK" button.

With the left operand is constructed, the user can select the division operator from the `Operators` pop–up menu. Next the user needs to fill in the right operand. Thus, the right `Attribute` button is pushed and a new instance of the Attribute window appears. The user then selects the `Number` radio button, pushes the `Number` button and enters the number "2" in the entry dialog (Figure 3.6), and pushes `OK`. Since the `select` clause is constructed, the user can push `OK` on the main attribute

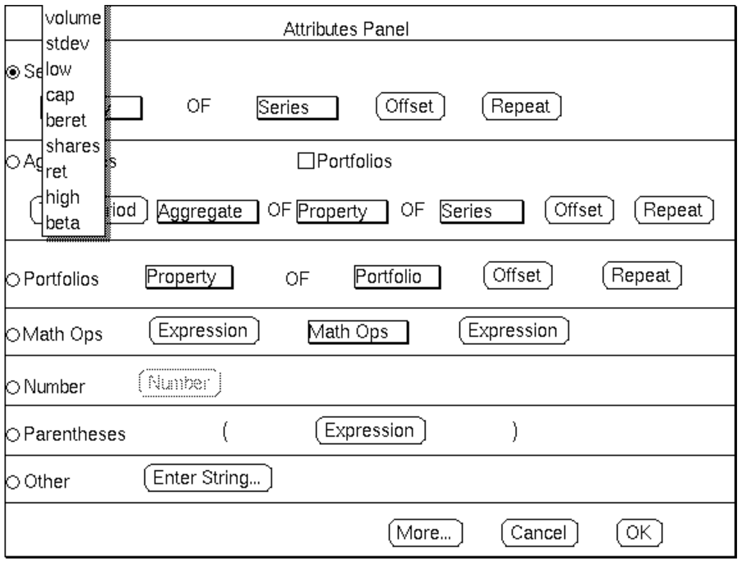


Figure 3.9: Selecting a Property on Series

window. This will cause the `select` clause to appear in the query editor.

To construct the `crosses` clause, the user pushes the `Conditions` button on the main window and selects the `Crosses` radio button on the resultant Conditions window. The user then pushes the left `Attribute` button, and a new attribute window appears, and the correct property and series are chosen from the menus. An example of selecting a property on a series is shown in Figure 3.9. After the left operand is selected, the right `Attribute` button is pushed and the right operand is selected in a similar manner. When this is done, the user pushes "OK" in the conditions window and the new `when` clause appears in the query editor. To execute this query, the `Send Query...` button is pushed on the main window. Upon successful execution by the server, the results will be shown in a query editor in display mode, similar to Figure 3.1.

3.2 Interface Design

In this section, I will cover topics related to the design of the interface. In Section 3.2.1, I will give a brief overview of InterViews, the graphics package that was used to build the interface. In Section 3.2.2, I will give a brief description of how InterViews and its interface builder are used. To close out the chapter I will provide some comments on the design of the interface in Sections 3.2.3 and 3.2.4.

3.2.1 InterViews

The basic platform upon which the Mimsy graphical interface is built is InterViews [LVC89]. Developed at Stanford University, it is a set of tools and a library of C++ classes that assist in the design and implementation of graphically interactive applications. InterViews' class library provides a high–level abstraction for dealing with graphical user interface objects, like scroll bars, push buttons, interface text windows, etc. It provides specific support for resolution–independent graphics, and a graphical tool to build user interfaces interactively [LCI+91]. InterViews is currently implemented on top of the X Window system [SG86].

3.2.2 Typical Use of InterViews

Typically, user interfaces are constructed in InterViews using the `ibuild` tool. The developer first constructs the interface graphically, and then generates the

C++ code for the interface. The generated code handles the normal user interface sets of actions, like resizing and re–drawing windows, hi–lighting buttons, drawing menus, etc. `Ibuild` will also generate function stubs for actions that need to be taken by user interface objects. For instance, for each menu item and each button in an interface, a function stub is generated so that the action to be taken upon activation of the user interface object can be coded by the developer later.

`Ibuild`, however, does not generate any code to handle anything that is application specific, like drawing graphics. Any application–specific behavior is coded by subclassing an existing object in the InterViews class hierarchy. The significant portion of time writing an InterViews application is spent in writing methods for these subclasses.

3.2.3 Design

To a large degree, InterViews, or rather `ibuild`, dictated the design of the graphical interface. For each window that appears on the screen, InterViews generates two classes. The first class, called the "core" class, is a subclass of an InterViews class called a MonoScene. A MonoScene defines the basic operations of a window. The core class defines the default behavior of components of the window. The core class is where most of the code is generated by `ibuild`. This generated code would, for example, contain methods to create push buttons and menus and place them on the screen.

The second class created by `ibuild` is a subclass of the core class. This is where all the modifications to the default behavior of components of the window are made. `Ibuild`, as was stated above, generates function stubs. These stubs are usually the action routines that are executed when a button is pushed or a menu item is chosen.

The main concept driving the design of the interface has been that the interface should mirror the behavior of the grammar. For example, a non–terminal in the grammar indicates a recursion into some other part of the grammar. Graphically this is represented by bringing up another window. A terminal in the grammar would represent some kind of input from the user. An example of this occurs when a user is constructing an arithmetic expression and finally needs to input a number. For this, a dialog box is put up for entry of the number.

3.2.4 Class Design

In this section, I will describe the layout of the class structure in the interface. When the application is started up, two windows are visible, the main window and the query editor. The appearance of the application at startup is shown in Figure 3.1. The window to the right is an instance of the MainWindow class. The window shows the general outline of the query and is meant to represent the "top–level" of the grammar.

The window to the left in Figure 3.1 is an instance of the QueryEditor class. The QueryEditor has two modes. First it acts as a means of displaying the query as it has been constructed by the user. In this mode, editing of the query is disallowed. This window is merely meant to show the progress of construction of the query.

The second mode for the query editor is one where it acts like a fully functional text editor. It does this for those users who wish to forego the construction of the query through normal means, or users who wish to send raw CORAL queries to the server. For more information on sending raw queries, See Section 3.1.

It should be noted that the QueryEditor class is also used to display the output of queries submitted to the server. These instances of the query editor act solely in display mode.

One purpose of the main window is to allow the user to bring up two windows: the attribute window (which is an instance of the AttributeDialog class) and the conditions window (which is an instance of the ConditionDialog class). The reason that both the attributes window and the conditions window are subclasses of the Dialog class in InterViews is because subclasses of the Dialog class behave like functions. They appear on the screen, get some information from the user, then disappear and return that information to the program. It should be noted that all windows in the interface except for the main window and the query editor window are subclasses of the InterViews Dialog class. The other purpose of the main window is to allow the construction of the `save as` clause. The `save as` clause was discussed in Section 2.9.

The attributes window, shown in Figure 3.3, allows the user to add any of the `select` attributes described in Section 2.4.1 to the query. One thing to note about the attribute window is that each button therein labelled “Expression” actually brings up another instance of the attribute window. This is how the recursive nature of the grammar is reflected.

The conditions window, shown in Figure 3.7, is used for adding `when` clauses to the query under construction. These clauses were discussed in Section 2.5. Note this window not only also brings up new instances of the attribute window, but also new instances of the condition window as well.

Chapter 4

The Translator

Bless thee, Bottom, bless thee. Thou art translated.
Peter Quince to Bottom – A Midsummer Night's Dream III.i(113)

Once a query has been received by either the command line interface or the graphical interface, the string is sent to the translator. The translator, which is about 7500 lines of C [PB89], is implemented using a bison–based [DS91] parser. If the query string acquired from the interface parses correctly, it is translated into CORAL and sent to the server.

The translator maintains a global structure which keeps track of interface options and pointers to its output files. One such file is the output file where the CORAL translation of the Mimsy language query is placed. Upon successful parsing, the contents of the output file are read and sent to the server over a socket connection. The result of the query, when received from the server, is read from the socket and sorted, and then either displayed at the terminal or graphed using the IPL package.

The overall task of the translator is simple: generate CORAL for the `when` clause so that all its results are collected into one temporary relation. This relation corresponds to the list of all dates that satisfied all the conditions in the `when` clause. This relation is then used generate dates on which the `select` clauses will be shown.

In this Section, a number of features of the Mimsy–to–CORAL translator will be covered. Optimizations that the translator performs on the intermediate representation of the Mimsy query are described in Section 4.1. Issues regarding the generation of CORAL are discussed in Section 4.2. A discussion of how CORAL code for expressions is generated is discussed in Section 4.3, and the generation of aggregates is discussed in Section 4.4. Generation of `repeated` clauses is discussed in Section 4.5 and the generation of the `crosses` clause is discussed in Section 4.6. Finally, the translation of extensibility strings is covered in Section 4.7 and the chapter is concluded with a discussion of optimizing date clauses.

4.1 Translator Transformations

When the translator receives an input string it parses the string into abstract syntax trees, or ASTs [ASU86]. The parser produces two ASTs, one for the `select` clause, and one for the `when` clause. There are several transformations performed on the ASTs in order to optimize them.

The first transformation performed is to transform a property/series pair into the name of the fast array relation to which it corresponds. Currently, all fast array relations are of the form SYMBOL_PROPERTY. For example, "close of ibm" would be transformed into "ibm_close." This is done for both the `select` AST and the `when` AST.

The second transformation involves date ranges in the `when` clause. Since a date range, e.g. "when date is from "1/1/80" to "1/1/90", represents a limitation of the selectivity [SAC+88], the date range clause is moved as far toward the top of the AST as possible. This is the equivalent of moving the date range clause to the beginning of the CORAL statement and has the effect of limiting the dates under consideration and narrowing the facts that must be iterated over.

The third transformation performed by the translator involves extracting expressions and creating series. This is needed for the `crosses` clause if its arguments are not series. The non–series arguments are projected into a temporary relation and the temporary relation will be substituted for the expression. Note that the expression extracted from the `crosses` clause will be defined across all dates. Therefore, the temporary relation created will be a fast array relation.

In the case where there are multiple ANDs and ORs in the `when` clause, the translator attempts to optimize the generated code by putting as many AND clauses into a single CORAL statement as possible. The effect of this is to have the leftmost CORAL clause provide limitations on the selectivity of the clauses to the right. It does this by collapsing the AST output by the parser. The effect of this is that if the translator finds an AND AST with no children whose parent is also an AND AST, it elevates the child AND AST to the parent. For example, the AST for the `when` clause:

```
when close of abc is up and close of b > 12
     and close of c is up more than 4%"
```

would correspond to the AST shown in Figure 4.1.

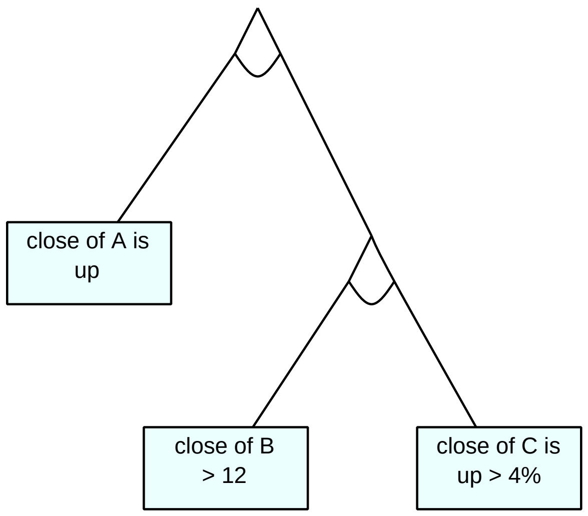


Figure 4.1: Unoptimized AND ASTs

In order to optimize this AST the tree must be rearranged and group all ANDs that associate together on the same level must be grouped together. The optimized AST is shown in Figure 4.2.

4.2 Generating CORAL

After the transformations have been applied to the ASTs, the ASTs are passed to the code generator which translates the ASTs to CORAL. In generating code for the `when` AST, the code generator follows a simple algorithm. The format of the `when` AST will be a tree of AND and OR nodes. If the generator finds an OR clause, it generates each branch on its own line. The result of each statement is projected into a temporary relation. If the generator finds an AND clause it

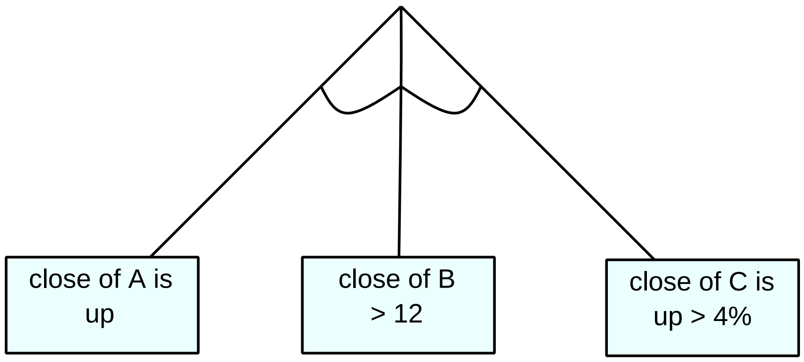


Figure 4.2: An optimized AND AST

generates all clauses contained in the AND clause (there may be more than 2 due to the optimization described above) on 1 line of CORAL output.

4.3 Generating Expressions

When the translator finds an expression in a clause, it first pulls out all the series and aggregates, and binds their values to variables. Next, it substitutes those variables in place of the series and aggregates. The translator next generates the expression. It does so by first generating the series and aggregates contained in the expression. The expression itself is then generated with the substituted variables, and the result is assigned to yet another variable. For example, given the following `select` clause,

```
    select 3 * close of sp500 / 12 + close of ibm;
```

The translator would output the following:

```
?sp500_close(__D,__T0),ibm_close(__D,__T1),
  __D0 =  3.000000  *  __T0  /  12.000000  +  __T1,
  dateuntranslate(__D,__DATESTRING),
  print(__DATESTRING,__D0),fail.
```

4.4 Generating Aggregates

Aggregates currently take the following form when translated into CORAL:

```
seqaverage(BDate,EDate,SeriesOrPortfolio,Answer).
```

The aggregate takes a begin date, an end date, and a symbol indicating what it is operating on and returns the answer in the last argument. By default, the aggregate behaves as if it were acting on a series. If the 3rd argument is a function symbol, e.g. `port_position(ibm_close)`, the aggregate behaves as if it were acting on a portfolio.

This distinction is made because properties on series are stored as a single array. For example, the closing price data for the stock ABC is stored as a single array. During translation, the phrase `close of abc` becomes the symbol `abc_close` which represents the name of the relation from which to obtain the data. On the other hand, portfolios do not contain any data; instead it contains references to the series that comprise the portfolio. In order to get data out of a portfolio, some operation must be applied to it. Therefore, in order for a portfolio to have any meaning, the operation to be applied to it must be included with it in order for the aggregate to act on it.

4.5 Generating Select Clauses with Repeated Clauses

When the `repeated` clause (Section 2.4.2) is used in the `select` portion of a query, the `foreach` CORAL built–in function is used. `Foreach` acts like a sequence generator, and takes the following form:

```
foreach(Result,Lowerbound,Upperbound).
```

Given integer input to `Lowerbound` and `Upperbound`, `foreach` will bind all integers in that range to `Result` one at a time, and fail after binding `Upperbound`. For example following query:

```
select close of abc repeated for 10 days
when close of abc is up more than 10%;
```

would be translated to:

```
whendates0(__D) +=  abc_close(__D,__D0),__T0 = __D + -1,
   abc_close(__T0,__D1),__D0 > __D1,
   __D0/__D1 > 1 +  10.000000 /100.

?whendates0(__D),__T0 = __D +  10,
   foreach(__T1,__D,__T0),abc_close(__T1,__D0),
   dateuntranslate(__T1,__DATESTRING),
   print(__DATESTRING,__D0),fail.
```

4.6 Generating Crosses Clauses

In Section 2.5.3, the negated version of the `crosses` predicate was described. The translated version of the query in Section 2.5.3 is shown below:

```
whendates0(D) += dates(D),D1 = D + -1,
  not crosses(D1,D,both,a_close,bclose).
?whendates0(D),a_close(D,D0),
  dateuntranslate(D,X),print(X, D0),fail.
```

As stated above, negated versions of the `crosses` clause use CORAL negation as opposed to defining a new negative version of the `crosses` predicate. The `crosses` predicate can also take numeric arguments, so the user can query to see when a series crosses a threshold. This particular feature could be useful for someone doing fundamental analysis or a "chartist" attempting to determine whether or not a piece of a series has the "head and shoulders" characteristic[Mal85]. To illustrate the above points, suppose a user wanted to see the value of a portfolio when it crossed a particular threshold. The user might enter a query similar to this:

```
select portfolio value of myport
when portfolio value of myport crosses 80000;
```

This would be translated to the following:

```
fast_rel(temprel0,sp500_close).
temprel0(__D,__D0) += dates(__D),
  port_value(__D,myport,__D0).
whendates0(__D) += dates(__D),__T0 = __D + -1,
  crosses(__T0,__D,both,temprel0,80000.0).
?whendates0(__D),port_value(__D,myport,__D0),
  dateuntranslate(__D,__DATESTRING),
  print(__DATESTRING,__D0),fail.
```

This translation also illustrates an important optimization undertaken by the translator. Whenever a non–series is encountered as an argument to a `crosses` clause, the non–series is projected out into a fast array relation (See Section 5.2). The `fast_rel` predicate at the beginning of the translation creates a new fast array relation using `sp500_close` as a template. Then the value of the portfolio myport is projected into the new relation temprel0. It should be noted that this does not provide any speedup since all the relation accesses inherent in accessing a portfolio that are now done in the projection would have been done in the body of crosses anyway.

4.7 Translation of Extensibility Strings

In Section 2.10 query language extensibility is described. There is no real translation for an extensibility string passed to the query language. It is merely passed through to the output. For example:

```
select close of abc,"new_series(Date,Val)",Val
when "extend(Date,X)" and X > 12.
```

would be translated into something similar to:

```
whendates(D) += dates(D),extend(D,X),X>12.
?whendates(D),a_close(D,D0),new_series(D,Val),D1=Val,
   dateuntranslate(D,X),print(X,D0,D1).
```

The only thing of consequence done to extensibility strings is that the string “Date” is replaced by the current date variable in the CORAL statement.

4.8 Date Optimization

Whenever the Mimsy translator sees a date range condition in a query, it attempts to move this date range as near to the beginning of the translated output as possible. The reason for this is that date range conditions limit the number of dates that the conditions must iterate over. Also, the translator recognizes and optimizes implicit date ranges. For example, given the following query:

```
select the close of abc
when date is after "1/1/90" and before "1/1/91";
```

the translator turns this into a query similar to:

```
select the close of abc
when date is from "1/1/90" to "1/1/91";
```

The translator then takes this new clause and optimizes it in the manner described above.

Furthermore, recognizing that Mimsy dates are stored as integers, the translator inserts an iterator, `foreach`, that produces only the dates from the lower bound to the upper bound for the range. This significantly reduces the number of times the `when` conditions must be executed and also limits the number of times that relations will be accessed unsuccessfully.

Chapter 5

The Server

He is justly served.
Laertes to Hamlet – Hamlet V.ii(279)

The server is constructed as a front–end to imperative CORAL. As a result of this, it has the entire CORAL interpreter built in. Operationally, the server, which is about 8800 lines of C++, merely listens to a socket, consults whatever comes over the socket and returns the result back to the originator.

The server is an iterative, connection–oriented server [Ste90]. The server is also where the major extensions to CORAL exist. A new type of relation, called a fast array relation, has been added and all of the series aggregates have been coded directly as CORAL built–ins for performance reasons.

5.1 Organization of the server

The server expects to find all of its data and start–up files in the server directory hierarchy. The location of the server directory is determined by the pre–processor macro LIBDIR or by the path associated with the "-l"option of the server. Both of these set the global variable `LibraryDir`. The organization of the server directory

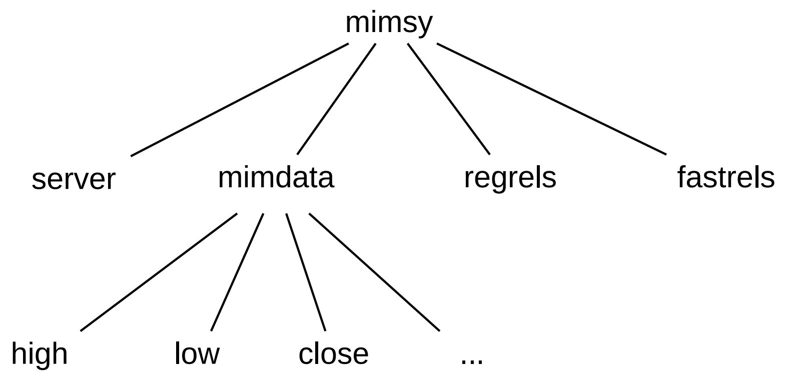


Figure 5.1: Organization of the Server Directory Hierarchy

hierarchy is shown in Figure 5.1.

The server expects to find its startup file in the "server" directory. This includes the file that contains the definition of all of the series. The stock data directory hierarchy is expected to reside in the "mimdata" directory. Any user defined CORAL relations are found in the "regrels" directory, and any fast array relations that were saved are expected in the "fastrels" directory. These relations are loaded at startup.

5.1.1 Server Start Up

To set up the operation of the server, a number of things happen when the server starts up. The file "servinit.F" in the server directory determines what operations are done at startup time. The server first loads the date translation table, which translates regular dates into date integers, and the CORAL program to handle the date offsets. Next, the server loads in the relation that defines the catalog of all base relations, and initializes all the base relations. The server then creates the `dates` relation, which is an unary relation that contains a date integer for every valid date in the system.

In the next step, the server loads in semantic information that will be used by both the command line interface and the graphical interface. This includes the currently defined series, properties of series, portfolio properties, aggregates, etc. This information is included in two files that are found in the "server" directory in the server directory hierarchy. The files create catalog relations that define the above properties. The first file, "semantics.P," is the module that projects out all the portfolio names, series (by ticker symbol), and series properties. The second file, "semantics.F," explicitly defines the current aggregates and portfolio properties.

Finally, the server loads the information that defines the portfolios by consulting the file "load_portfolios.F." This defines the portfolio schema by creating all the portfolios through calls to the `create_portfolio` CORAL built–in and assigning the result to the `portfolio` relation.

5.2 Fast Array Relations

One of the classic problems of dealing with stock market data is that it does not fit into the relational model very well. In the relational data model, every "object" is treated as a table of an unspecified (though potentially large) number of columns. The cost of maintaining this generality often makes accessing stock market, and indeed all time–series, both time and space inefficient. Some Wall Street investment banks have even been known to use environments geared toward dealing with vectors and matrices for their historical stock market data, like APL [GR84, Ive62], and eschewing the use of RDBMSs completely.

In order to allow CORAL to operate efficiently on time–series data, a new type of relation has been added to CORAL which facilitates fast access of sequence data. FastArrayRelation is a subclass of the CORAL class Relation and was added to the CORAL class hierarchy by overriding three methods and the constructor.

A filename is passed to the FastArrayRelation in the constructor which specifies the location of the data file. The data is loaded into the file the first time the relation is iterated over. The data is stored in the file as a binary array, so that it can be loaded directly into memory without any translation. It is assumed that the data in the file is in the host machine's numeric format.

A FastArrayRelation can be either unary or binary. When the relation is unary, the only allowable form is to have its argument unbound and to be of type integer. This form is primarily used as a sequence generator, that is, to generate a set of contiguous integers to act as an index for binary FastArrayRelations.

Binary FastArrayRelations handle sequences. The class name for binary FastArrayRelations is "BinaryFastArrayRelation." The first column is an integer index. The second column is the value for that index, and is either a double precision floating point number or an integer. The first column of the relation is not actually stored. When the data is loaded, the header information, described below, contains the number of elements in the array and the lower bound. From this, the first column can be synthesized. It is assumed that binary FastArrayRelations are read–only, since the stock data is relatively static.

There is a specialized type of binary FastArrayRelations which allows inserts. It is called an InsertableBFARelation. These relations are created by the `fast_rel` built–in, which is described in Section 4.6. It is primarily used for creating fast intermediate relations used by translated queries.

The second column is retrieved by a simple C++ array access. Also, CORAL built–ins that are aware of FastArrayRelations can use the C++ method:

```
FastArrayRelation::operator[](int i)
```

to access the data in the relation without having to open a scan descriptor and use the more common but more expensive method of iterating across tuples.

Each of the types of fast array relations is actually a C++ class. The FastArrayRelation hierarchy is shown in Figure 5.2.

5.3 The Schema Relation

When the server starts up, it loads a CORAL relation named `sequence_schema`. A tuple in this relation looks something like:

```
sequence_schema(sp500,close,"").
```

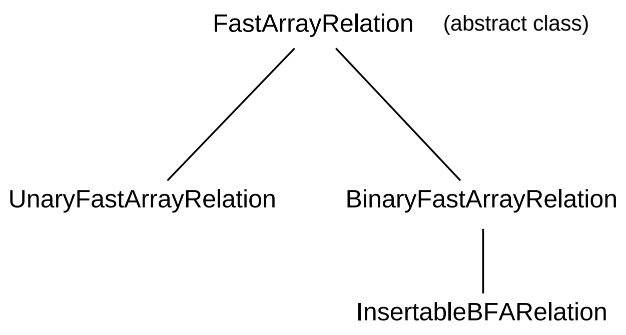


Figure 5.2: The FastArrayRelation class hierarchy

The first column is the name of the series. The second column is the name of the property by which this sequence will be recognized. The third column is the name of the file to load in order to instantiate the relation. If the third column is null, this means that it is a fast array relation and should exist in the "mimdata" directory in the server directory hierarchy. If the third column is not null, the string is passed to consult(), which then loads the file. It is assumed that the relation created from each line in the schema relation will have a name that consists of the first column, followed by an underscore, followed by the second column. For the case shown previously the relation generated is `sp500_close`.

After the schema relation is loaded, a user–defined built–in, `init_sequences`, is called which initializes the fast array relations, and consults any CORAL files found in the third column of the relation.

5.4 Implementation of Portfolios

While fast array relations have shown that CORAL relations can be extended, the implementation of portfolios shows that CORAL data types can be extended. When a "create" command like the one in Section 2.2 is sent to the translator, it is translated into the following:

```
portfolio(myport,X) += create_portfolio([[drv,1000,9.25],
    [adt,1000,12.5]],X).
```

The `create_portfolio` predicate creates a portfolio data type and binds it to the variable X. X and the name of the portfolio are then inserted into the `portfolio` relation as a tuple. Note that all portfolios are stored in the `portfolio` relation.

The portfolio data type is implemented as a list of triples. The triple consists of a pointer to the relation containing the price data for the stock, the number of shares of the stock, and the price at which the stock was bought.

Portfolios are aware of the type of relations they contain. This means that if a relation is a fast array relation, tuples in it will be accessed via the shortcut provided. Otherwise, the usual means of accessing a relation will be used.

There are currently two properties that can be applied to portfolios, `position` and `value`. They are of the following form:

```
port_value(Day,PortfolioName,Answer).
port_position(Day,PortfolioName,Answer).
```

All portfolio properties have the prefix "port_". These properties are currently written as CORAL built–in functions. These properties behave by first retrieving the portfolio data type from the portfolio relation and then applying the appropriate actions to the portfolio data type. It should be noted that these built–in functions act as cover functions since the portfolio data type has methods for computing its position and value.

5.5 Extensibility

At the lowest level, the server is extensible, because the user can send arbitrary strings to the server via the "send" command in the command line interface. This allows any CORAL statement to be executed on the server. This section discusses more how extensions to the query language are handled, and how CORAL has been extended in the server apart from fast array relations.

5.5.1 Query Language

When an extensibility string is used in a Mimsy query, it is placed unchanged into the translated output. Since Mimsy cannot know about all relations that are defined to the server, there is no validity checking done. Thus, it is expected that a user who uses the extensibility feature knows what s/he is doing.

5.5.2 Current Extensions to Mimsy

Several CORAL built–ins have been added to the server in addition to `fast_rel` (Section 4.6) and `foreach` (Section 4.5). There are built–ins that handle date translation: `datetranslate` and `dateuntranslate`. `Datetranslate` takes in a string and turns it into the appropriate date integer. `Dateuntranslate` performs the inverse operation. `Init_sequences` is a CORAL built–in that iterates across the sequence schema and loads and initializes the appropriate schemas. The final user built–in added to CORAL is `fast_unary_relation`, which takes in a name and two integers, and creates an unary FastArrayRelation whose bounds are the two integer arguments. This built–in is used for creating a fast space–efficient relation used for iterating over a range of dates.

5.5.3 Crosses

The final extension to CORAL in the server is the `crosses` built–in relation. This built–in, which implements the `crosses` clause in the query language, takes in two symbols that it expects to be relation names and succeeds for the date range provided if prices of the two relations cross. It does this by opening scans on the two relations and succeeding if any crosses are found. This predicate knows about FastArrayRelations and uses this knowledge to optimize the scans on the two relations.

5.5.4 Adding to the Server

The server, like CORAL, is meant to be extensible. It is possible to add new predicates to the query language as shown above. Users can add new relations by issuing the save command at the interface, as shown in Section 2.2, and can add new aggregates and portfolios as well. Adding new series to the server is discussed in Section 5.5.5. Adding new portfolios to the server is discussed in Section 5.5.6, and adding new aggregates is discussed in Section 5.5.7.

5.5.5 Adding New Series

Users can define series in one of two ways. First, new data can be added to the server. Second, a CORAL module can be loaded into the server that defines a new series.

Data can be added to the server by placing a properly formatted file in the proper directory. For a discussion of the CORAL data layout, see Section 5.6.2.

To add a derived series to the server via a CORAL module, the module should be placed in the "server" directory in the server directory hierarchy. In both cases, information about the new schema should be added to the sequence schema. For more information on the sequence schema, see Section 5.3.

5.5.6 Adding New Portfolios and Portfolio Properties

Creating new portfolios and making them persistent is described in Section 2.2. To add a new property on a portfolio, the user defines a CORAL predicate of the following form:

```
port_newprop(Date,Portfolioname,Answer).
```

where `Portfolioname` is the name associated with the portfolio in the `portfolio` relation. Note that all portfolio properties have the prefix "port_" followed by their lexical value. For example, if we wanted to define a new portfolio property which

```
module port.
export port_sqrt(bbf).

port_sqrt(D,P,Ans) :- port_value(D,P,X), pow(X,.5,Ans).

end_module.
```

Figure 5.3: CORAL module defining the square root of value of a portfolio.

returned the square root of the value of the portfolio and we wanted to refer to this property by the name “sqrt”, the name of the new portfolio property would be “port_sqrt”.

There are two ways to add a new portfolio property. The first is to code the new property as a CORAL built–in and compile it into the server. The description of how to write CORAL built–ins is outside the scope of this thesis. For more information on writing built–ins, see [RSSS93a].

The second way to add new portfolio properties is to add CORAL modules to the server. The CORAL module for the square root of a portfolio’s value is shown in Figure 5.3. This module file would be placed in the “server” directory and an entry to the semantics files would be added so that the clients can know of its existence. The file must also be consulted. The best way to do this is to add a line to the semantics file to consult the new module. Currently, there is no way to iterate across the values of all of the individual stocks in a portfolio. In the future, a new CORAL built–in will be provided which will be defined as follows:

```
portfolio_iterate(PortfolioDataType,RelationName).
```

The predicate `portfolio_iterate` will be called with the first argument bound and the second argument free. It will succeed once for each stock in the portfolio, binding the symbol identifying the relation name to `RelationName` for each stock in the portfolio. This will facilitate creating properties for portfolios because it will allow access to all stocks in the portfolio.

5.5.7 Adding New Aggregates

Adding aggregates to the server is done in a similar fashion. An aggregate is defined as follows, using "average" as an example:

```
    seqaverage(BeginDate,EndDate,SeriesORPortfolio,Answer).
```

The names of all aggregates, in their translated form, begin with the prefix "seq" and end with their lexical value. The aggregate computes the appropriate value from `BeginDate` to `EndDate` for the series or portfolio and returns the result in `Answer`. As stated in Section 4.3, if the third argument of the aggregate is a symbol, then the aggregate should behave as if it is acting on a series. If the third argument is a functor, the aggregate should behave as if it is acting on a portfolio. As with portfolios, there are two ways to define new aggregates, as new built–ins to be compiled into the server, or as CORAL modules to be loaded into the server at startup.

To define a new CORAL module aggregate to the system, an entry to the aggregate relation must be added to the file "semantics.F". The aggregate relation serves to define the list of all aggregates available to the system. Additionally, a line to consult the file must be added.

5.6 The Data

This sections describes the data that is used by Mimsy. Section 5.6.1 describes the format of the original data. Section 5.6.2 describes the format of fast array relation data and how to get it into that format from the CRSP file format.

5.6.1 Format of the Original Data

The data in the current Mimsy system comes from the University of Chicago's Center for Research in Security Prices. Mimsy uses a subset of this data. The format of the data (called the "stock" format) in its original form is shown in Figure 5.1.

The format of the S&P 500 file is a little bit different. Its layout is (with FORTRAN equivalents) is show in Figure 5.2.

5.6.2 Formatting the Data

Assuming that dates are in the formats specified above, there are two GAWK [RF89] scripts that can be used for data conversion.

The first script is "partition.awk" which takes as input a file in the "stock" format. A variable named "dir" is defined in the script that points to where the data files will be placed. For each stock, it creates a single file for each column of

Column	Field Name
1-8	CUSIP
9-13	number of observations
14-18	start date index
19-23	Exchange Listing Code
24-28	SIC Code
29-33	Number of Distributions Structures
34-38	Number of Shares Structures
39-43	Number of NASDAQ Information Structures
44-51	Date (YYMMDD)
52-62	Bid or Low Price
63-73	Ask or High Price
74-84	Closing Price
85-96	Volume
97-109	Return
110-121	Shares Outstanding
122-133	Beta Excess Return
134-145	Std Dev Excess Return
146-151	Capitalization Portfolio Assignment
152-156	Std Dev Portfolio Assignment
157-163	Beta Portfolio Assignment
164-179	Year End Capitalization
180-191	Annual Std Dev
192-203	Annual Beta

Table 5.1: CRSP Stock file layout

Columns	Field Name	FORTRAN Format
1-6	Date	YYMMDD
7-20	Value-weighted with dividends	E14.6
21-34	Value-weighted without dividends	E14.6
35-48	Equal-weighted with dividends	E14.6
49-62	Equal-weighted without dividends	E14.6
73-78	Total market value in $1000	E16.8
79-84	Total market count	I6
85-100	Market value of securities used	E16.8
101-106	Count of securities used	I6
107-114	S&P Composite Index	F8.2
115-128	Return on S&P Composite Index	E14.6

Table 5.2: S & P 500 file layout

interest in the input file.

The format of the data file is simple. The first line specifies the data type, which is either "double" or "integer". The second line is the number of data points in the file. The third line is the lower bound of the synthesized index to be used in the FastArrayRelation. The rest of the file is the data points, one per line.

The utility to put the data files into binary format is called "conv". It takes filenames of the form "filename.dat" from the command line and translates them into FastArrayRelation–readable files in the same directory. There is also a utility called "gen" which can be used to generate new files with a uniform distribution of random data points.

The format of the FastArrayRelation–readable files consists of a header followed

```
typedef struct mf {
  unsigned short magic;
  numarg_kind kind;
  long num_datapoints;
  long lowerbound;
  char notused[2];
} file_header;
```

Figure 5.4: Format of the binary data files

by a binary array of the data. The definition of the 16 byte header is shown in Figure 5.6.2.

The FastArrayRelation–readable files are in the "mimdata" directory in the server directory hierarchy. Inside the "mimdata" directory, there are directories that correspond to the property names available to Mimsy. Inside each directory are the binary files that comprise the data. These files are named after the stock symbols they represent. For example the volume for IBM would appear in the file LibraryDir/mimdata/volume/ibm.

The second GAWK script is called "sp500.awk" which takes a CRSP data file in the S&P 500 format and projects out the column which contains the value of the index. This file is placed in LibraryDir/close/sp500.dat. The "conv" utility is run on it to make it readable by FastArrayRelations.

Appendix A

Grammar of Mimsy

Below is a definition of the Mimsy query language grammar. As in most grammar specifications works all capitals indicates that the word is a keyword or symbol in the language. Words in lower case indicate non-terminals.

```
query: select_query |graph_query;

select_query: SELECT select_attr_list   when_clause save_as ';'

graph_query:  GRAPH select_attr_list when_clause save_as ';'

/*********************************************************************
  SELECT SECTION
*********************************************************************/
/* handle the head of the list */
select_attr_list: select_attr select_attr_list1

/* handle the rest of the list */
select_attr_list1: /* empty */
 | ','

select_attr:   select_expr repeat_clause ;

select_expr: series
  | agg_on_series
  | number
  | select_expr PLUS select_expr
  | select_expr TIMES select_expr
  | select_expr MINUS select_expr
  | select_expr DIVIDE select_expr
  | select_expr POWER select_expr
  | '(' select_expr ')'
  | VARIABLE
  | STRING ':' VARIABLE ;


agg_on_series: aggr_operation OF series    ;

repeat_clause: /* empty */
  |REPEATED end_repeat
  ;

end_repeat: FOR the day time_granularity
  | FOR INTEGER time_granularity
  | interval
  ;

interval: FROM the range_date TO the range_date ;

aggr_operation: THE aggr_interval aggr_operators  ;

aggr_interval: /* empty */
   | INTEGER time_granularity
    ;

aggr_operators: ID ;

offset_clause: /* empty */
  | INTEGER time_granularity rel_position  ;

time_granularity: DAY
  | WEEK
  | MONTH
  | QUARTER
  | YEAR
  ;

rel_position: AGO
  | LATER
  ;

date: date_data   ;

date_data: ID
  | STRING ;

range_date: day time_granularity   ;
```

```
day: CURRENT
  | PREVIOUS INTEGER
  | NEXT INTEGER  ;

series: property OF sequence offset_clause
| PORTFOLIO port_property OF portfolio offset_clause  ;

the: /* empty */{$$ = $0;}
  | THE ;                       /* vacuous  */

property: ID  ;


sequence: ID ;
| STRING ;

port_property: ID  ;

portfolio: ID  ;

/*******************************************************************
Save as: for saving relations result relations.
*******************************************************************/

save_as: /* empty */
| SAVE AS STRING   ;

/*******************************************************************
  WHEN SECTION
*******************************************************************/

when_clause: /* empty */
  | WHEN when_phrase
;

when_phrase: date_cond
   | select_expr rel_op select_expr cond_interval
   | select_expr IS change cond_interval
   | select_expr IS change rel_op select_expr cond_interval
   | select_expr IS change rel_op select_expr '%' cond_interval
   | select_expr crosses select_expr cond_interval
   | when_phrase AND when_phrase
   | when_phrase OR when_phrase
   | STRING
   | '(' when_phrase ')'
  ;
```

```
/*******************************************************************
  WHEN PHRASES
*******************************************************************/

date_cond: DATE dateop date
   | DATE IS FROM date TO date
   | DATE IS ON ID
   | DATE IS IN ID
   | DATE IS IN INTEGER   ;

dateop: IS
  | EQUALS
  | IS NOT
  | IS BEFORE
  | IS AFTER
  ;

/*******************************************************************
CROSSES Section: This section can be used to extend to any 2 series
 conditions
*******************************************************************/

crosses: does NOT ID crosses_where
| ID crosses_where  ;

does: /* empty*/
  | DOES;

crosses_where: /* empty */
  | ABOVE
  | BELOW
;

cond_interval: /* empty */
  | OVER aggr_interval
  | interval
  ;

change: UP
  | DOWN
  | NOT UP
  | NOT DOWN
  ;

rel_op: not_equal
  | less_than
  | less_equal
  | equal
  | greater_equal
  | greater_than
  ;

is: /* empty */
  | IS;

not_equal: NOTEQUAL ;

less_than: LESS THAN
  | LESSSIGN ;
less_equal: AT MOST
  | LEQUAL;

equal: is EXACTLY
  | EQUALS;

greater_equal: AT LEAST
  | GEQUAL;

greater_than: MORE THAN
  | GREATER ;

number: FLOAT
      | INTEGER
      ;
```

Appendix B

Parsedate

The following is copied from the parsedate(3) manual page, and is ©1990 CMU. It explains the syntax of the date strings used in the Mimsy query language.

The date strings used in the Mimsy query language may be specified in one of several standard syntaxes or by using a limited range of natural language constructs.

The standard syntaxes are as follows:

```
<monthnum>/<day>/<year>
```

Months should be either spelled out or specified numerically as indicated above. Years may be specified in either two or four digit style, or may be omitted. Commas, spaces, tabs and newlines may be used interchangeably to delimit fields according to individual taste. Case is ignored in recognizing all words. Month and day names may be abbreviated to three characters, but other words must be spelled out in full.

Tue Jan 1 11:56 1980
3-December-80,14:23:00
March 4, 1984 11:01
12/22/79
today 7pm
this morning at 5
Thursday at 3
three weeks before christmas
four weeks from today
next Wednesday 17:00
ten days after 25th June 03:00
friday 13th at 1530
the second friday after christmas
three days ago
a month ago
two years from today
now

Figure B.1: Examples of valid date strings in Mimsy

For compatibility with the ctime(3) subroutines, dates of the form

```
<weekday> <monthname> <day> <time> <year>
```

are also accepted.

The following examples illustrate the use of standard syntaxes and also some of the natural language constructs(Note that in the Mimsy implementation, the times are ignored).

Note: 10th means the past 10th day of some month.

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